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NATIONAL POLITICS.

SPEECH

OF

HON. BENJAMIN F. LEITER, OF OHIO,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AUGUST 12, 1856.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. LEITER said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question which now agitates this country, and has so often convulsed it from its center to its circumference, I regard as the most dangerous and most to be dreaded of all questions ever presented to the consideration of the American people. It was the source of immense difficulty among the people who first permanently settled on this continent, and from its first introduction down to the present day has done more mischief than all the other agitating subjects discussed before the people. While we were yet under the colonial government, the people saw its evil consequences, and denounced it in strong and emphatic language as a monstrous evil. The colonial Assembly of Virginia frequently passed laws restricting or prohibiting the slave trade. If they had regarded slavery as her representatives now do, there never would have been such acts passed. They regarded it as an evil and a curse upon the energies of the colony. Now her representatives regard it as a blessing. What a change!

I will now call the attention of gentlemen who claim that slavery is right and a great blessing to the opinions and judgments of those who have gone before them, and whose opinions are held in high esteem by all good men. In June, 1774, the people of Prince George's county, Virginia, at a general meeting, passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the African trade is injurious to this colony, obstructs the population of it by freemen, prevents manufacturers and other useful emigrants from Europe from settling amongst us, and occasions an annual increase of the balance of trade against this colony."—*American Archives*, 4th series, vol. 1, p. 493.

This resolution contains an unequivocal denunciation of the slave trade, and most assuredly of slavery. It may be claimed that it was only intended to prohibit the slave trade; but, sir, this claim cannot stand, for if slavery was a blessing, as it is now claimed, surely they would not

have declared against it, but would have, by the slave trade, encouraged it. Those people had the correct view of it. They knew that free white laborers would not come under the contaminating influence of it. They saw that it prevented mechanics and other useful emigrants from Europe coming there.

On the 7th day of July, 1774, the people of Culpepper county, Virginia, assembled at the court-house, in said county, and passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the importing slaves and convict servants is injurious to this colony, as it obstructs the population of it with freemen and useful manufacturers, and that we will not buy any such slave or convict servant hereafter to be imported."

If those colonists held the opinions of gentlemen from that State now occupying seats here, they were very simple indeed for thus declaring against a great blessing. They, sir, thank God, held no such principles and doctrines as are now taught by the representatives from the "Old Dominion." They were a liberty-loving people, whose desire it was to eradicate the evil, and not extend it over free territory.

On the 11th day of July, 1774, a meeting was held by the inhabitants of Nansemond county, Virginia, at which a resolution was passed, which is an exact copy of the resolution passed at the Prince George's county meeting.

On the 14th day of July, 1774, at a meeting in Caroline county, Virginia, a similar resolution passed.

On the 16th day of July, 1774, the people of Surry county, Virginia, passed a resolution of the same import.

Meetings were held in different counties of that colony, at which similar resolutions were passed. And on Monday, the 18th day of July, 1774, the people of Fairfax county, Virginia, at the court-house, in Alexandria, held a general meeting, over which George Washington presided, and passed the following resolutions:

"Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that, during our present difficulties and distress, no slaves ought to be imported into any of the British colonies on this con-

tiuent; and we take this opportunity of declaring our most earnest wishes to see an entire stop forever put to such a wicked, cruel, and unnatural trade.

"Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that a solemn covenant and association should be entered into by the inhabitants of all the colonies for this purpose."

Was this declaration to be understood as only against the slave trade? I think not, but do think it was intended as a fatal stroke at the whole system of slavery. They did not regard slavery as a blessing; for if they had so regarded it they never would have thus attempted to cripple and destroy it, by preventing the importation of slaves. In this meeting the "Father of his Country" figured. This meeting met his sanction and approval, and I am proud to refer to it. I thank God for the influence of his name in this crisis.

A general meeting on this subject was held at Williamsburg, Virginia, on the 1st day of August, 1774, to which Thomas Jefferson was appointed a delegate, but was prevented from attending by sickness. This great apostle of Democracy, being anxious to give the weight of his influence to the good cause, wrote a letter, addressed to the meeting, from which I will now read an extract:

"The abolition of slavery is the greatest object of my desire in these colonies, where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state; but previous to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa. Yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions, and by imposing duties, which might amount to a prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by his Majesty's negative: thus preferring the immediate advantage of a few African corsairs to the lasting interests of the American States, and to the rights of human nature, deeply wounded by this infamous practice."—*American Archives*, 4th series, vol. 1, p. 696.

"The abolition of slavery is the greatest object of my desire." Hear the words of the founder of American Democracy; the words of the "Sage of Monticello"—words that will live when all selfishness and slavery will be forgotten. These words will never die—they are immortal! Why, sir, this great and good man, this American Democrat, contemplated, not only the abolition of slavery, but the enfranchisement of the African. He knew what Democracy meant, and what was due to humanity. Here, too, you can learn the object of the meetings that were then held in the colony of Virginia. Their object was not the abolition of the African slave trade alone, but the abolition of slavery also. They were anxious to get rid of a practice he branded as "infamous."

Where could you get stronger language of condemnation than from this patriot and statesman of Virginia against slavery? "An infamous practice!" Yes, infamous then, when human rights were respected, but a blessing now, when a universal disregard of the rights of humanity pervades the ranks of the so-called Democracy.

I have a beautiful quotation from a sermon preached by the Rev. John J. Zubly, D. D., of Savannah, Georgia, on the 4th day of July, 1775. "The law of liberty"—this was his subject:

"That government and tyranny are the hereditary right of some, and that slavery and oppression are the original doom of others, is a doctrine that would reflect dishonor upon God. It is treason against all mankind."—*American Archives*, 4th series, vol. 2, p. 1545.

These are the words of a southern statesman and Christian in the days of primitive Democracy, and pure and undefiled Christianity. Here let northern

men—northern Democrats—learn a lesson of patriotism and Christianity. Here, too, let southern men hesitate and reflect upon the words of their glorious predecessors, and imitate their patriotic example, by raising their voices against the extension of an institution denounced and repudiated by them as "infamous," and reflecting "dishonor upon God," and "treason against all mankind."

Now, sir, we find degenerate Georgians upon this floor, who have abandoned the true faith of their fathers upon this question, not only eulogizing slavery as a great blessing, but are quoting Scripture, and endeavoring to torture it into a favorable construction in support of this denounced and repudiated institution. Those gentlemen, in the language of Dr. Zubly, are heaping "dishonor upon God," and are guilty of "treason against all mankind." And yet, sir, these gentlemen claim to be "the real Simon pure Democracy."

These doctrines, measures, and principles of Washington, Jefferson, and Dr. Zubly, were indorsed by the people of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, as appears from the action of the First Continental Congress, assembled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 5, 1774. In that Congress, we find such patriots as George Washington, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Patrick Henry, John Jay, Philip Livingston, Benjamin Harrison, Richard Henry Lee, and a host of like spirits. These names are immortal in memory, and will live forever in American history.

When such men, surrounded with a halo of glory, denounce an institution as "wicked, cruel, and unnatural," who will defend it? When such men declare an institution "dangerous to virtue and the welfare of the country," who will sanction it? When such statesmen and sages brand as "infamous" an institution, who will defend, sustain, or maintain it? These are questions, sir, to which I will not claim a response from gentlemen now representing the slave States, to be publicly made; but I demand of them that each propound them to his own heart, secretly, quietly, and unreservedly, as a man, and then speak boldly the honest response of a pure heart, and this nation will be able to present such a galaxy of faithful anti-slavery men as has never yet been seen.

On the 12th day of January, 1775, the representatives of the district of Darien, Georgia, adopted the following preamble and resolution:

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the extensive district of Darien, in the colony of Georgia, having now assembled in Congress, by authority and free choice of the inhabitants of said district, now freed from their fetters, do resolve—to show the world that we are not influenced by any contracted or interested motives, but a general philanthropy for all mankind, of whatever climate, language, or complexion, hereby declare our disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of American slavery, (however the uncultivated state of our country, or other specious arguments may plead for it,) a practice founded in injustice and cruelty, and highly dangerous to our liberties, (as well as lives,) debasing part of our fellow creatures below men, and corrupting the virtue and morals of the rest; and as laying the basis of that liberty we contend for (and which we pray the Almighty to continue to the latest posterity) upon a very wrong foundation. We therefore resolve, at all times, to use our utmost endeavors for the manumission of our slaves in this colony, upon the most safe and equitable

footing for the masters and themselves."—*American Archives*, 4th series, vol. 1, p. 1136.

This, sir, at that early day, was the sentiment of the men of Darien—the men of Georgia, who loved liberty and respected the rights of man. These men saw the debasing injustice and cruelty of the "peculiar institution of the South." Slavery was not regarded by them as a "moral, social, and political blessing." No, sir, such sentiments had no place in their generous hearts. No argument, however strong, could induce them to sanction such an institution—such inhumanity and flagrant violation of every principle of right and justice.

Theirs was an enlarged philanthropy and embraced "all mankind, of whatever climate, language, or complexion," within its bounds.

Self-interest, and even the uncultivated state of their country, were powerless arguments with those liberty-loving, Christian people. They, in their high regard and approbation of right and justice, declare their "disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of American slavery." Who, that ever loved liberty, did not? Who, that regards the rights of man and loves liberty, does now not despise and denounce it? Men of Georgia, you are the sons of noble sires. Your early history should be your pride, and you should study it daily and learn from it useful lessons.

If time and space would permit, I could give you many instances of as strong expressions of disapprobation by the people of Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, as those cited by me; but, inasmuch as I have given fair cases for my purpose, I desist, and pass from those mentioned to the most important one that ever gave expression against human bondage.

On the ever-memorable 4th of July, 1776, the friends of freedom in Congress, assembled in the city of Philadelphia, signed the Declaration of American Independence, which gave birth to our Republic and immortalized the memory of that day. They, sir, declared solemn truths that we should not forget. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Upon these principles our fathers planted themselves, with a firm reliance on the rectitude of their position, and appealed "to the Supreme Judge of the world" in support of the justice of their declaration.

Those statesmen and patriots mutually pledged to each other, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, to carry out the principles of their declaration, so solemnly made and published to the world. They, sir, submitted their principles to Almighty God, and received His righteous approval. They showed that they meant what they said, and were determined, let come what would, to carry out their purpose of emancipation, not only of the whites, but of all the inhabitants of the land. "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to every inhabitant thereof," was the motto of our patriot fathers. All men are born free and equal. Glorious, self-inspiring language—ideas grand, magnificent, majestic, and glorious—born in heaven, and consigned by Almighty God to the care of our patriotic, humane, and

benevolent fathers, for instruction to direct them in the establishment and perfection of our independence as a people, and the erection of a government founded on those immutable principles of right and a common brotherhood of all mankind. Those patriots and statesmen, in fulfillment of their pledges to the people and the country, by all their power and influence, endeavored to establish for universal freedom a firm foundation; and in all their acts, doings, and proceedings, this fact is developed.

When the storms of adversity beat heavily upon them, and they had no power to look to except the justice of their cause, and the interposition of God in strengthening their arms, they made their pledges in the sight of Heaven and the presence of men, faithfully and strictly to be redeemed. There is no time when true Christianity can be so well tested as in adversity. When a heavy hand is laid upon the true Christian, his property destroyed, abandoned by his friends, those of his household one by one called from time to eternity, until all is gone, and there is no one left to share his misfortunes and bereavement, then his integrity as a Christian is fully tested, and he will exclaim, in the language of Job, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed is the name of the Lord."

When the true patriots of the Revolution saw that their rights had been usurped and trampled upon ruthlessly, and that they must eventually become slaves, they were ready to proclaim liberty throughout the land, and to every inhabitant thereof. It was the honest expression of the true patriots, made under the most exceedingly adverse circumstances. The black cloud of despotism had gathered around them, and was hanging portentously over them, threatening devastation and destruction. Their love of freedom was not the result of a morbid and selfish desire for their personal aggrandizement; but a profound regard for right, justice, humanity, and obedience to a Christian requirement. They were unwilling to enter into a revolutionary struggle with the mother country, without first repudiating, denouncing, and renouncing all allegiance to slavery. They could not beseech God's blessing upon themselves and their country while they were standing in direct antagonism with every principle of right, justice, humanity, and God's laws. They therefore promised God and the country that all men should be free, and duly made proclamation of the same.

Their revolutionary struggle was successful, and their pledges were outstanding. They then entered upon the organization of a Government for their protection and security. They organized a tottering Confederacy with but little confidence of success. They, in accordance with their pledges, attempted to secure the people in their right to life, liberty, and happiness by a hastily fitted-up confederate Government, which was soon found to be inadequate to that purpose. It was found that something must be done to make the objects of the confederation effectual, and secure men in their rights.

The best and ablest statesmen in the land were sent to Philadelphia to digest and form a new Government for the nation. That convention, after patient deliberation, earnest debate, and cautious decision, presented to the people the

present Constitution of the United States, which we may justly say surpasses any similar work of man. The Constitution, however, contained a few provisions that were objectional. The section licensing the African slave trade for twenty years was a national dishonor, and was so regarded by George Mason, of Virginia, who used the following language against it:

"This is a fatal section. The augmentation of slaves weakens the States; and such a trade is diabolical in itself and disgraceful to mankind. But by this Constitution it is continued for twenty years. As much as I value a union of all the States, I would not admit the southern States into the Union, unless they agreed to the discontinuance of this disgraceful trade. I cannot express my detestation of it."

Mr. Tyler, of Virginia, said of it:

"My earnest desire is, that it should be handed down to posterity that I opposed this wicked clause."

This article was a shameful profanity of the covenants and pledges of the fathers, solemnly made; yet the people, for the sake of union and harmony, adopted it, and it was quietly permitted to run out the time limited in its behalf. It now stands only as a monument of shame in our Constitution.

"The augmentation of slaves weakens the State." This declaration comes with double force when we look at the present condition of our country. Who does not see its tottering condition now? Who does not see that the whole trouble is caused by slavery? Who does not see that it has been gradually weakening the bonds of union? Who does not now see its threatening and menacing position? Truer words than those spoken by George Mason, of Virginia, in regard to this institution, never fell from the lips of man. They were solemn truths—prophetic words—and we now all realize their importance and truthfulness. Would to God his admonitions had been heeded and his warning voice regarded! But, unfortunately for the country, his warning voice, and those of his friends and compatriots, Gerry, Morris, Wilson, Randolph, Madison, and Luther Martin, with a host of others, were disregarded, and now we are reaping the reward of violated faith and broken covenants in a whirlwind of political excitement caused by that institution threatening our Union.

The first step in the right direction was the passage of the ordinance of 1787, for the government of the Northwestern Territory. That ordinance prohibited slavery in all that immense territory north of the river Ohio, which has now a population of over seven millions of freemen, and not a single slave. That mighty empire, which is now the most prosperous part of this Union, was saved to freedom and freemen, because of the prohibition of slavery; for if that had not been done, that country, too, would now be cursed with that blighting institution. That ordinance which met the approval and sanction of the patriots and sages of the Revolution—that ordinance which gave construction to the Constitution on the question of legislation by Congress for the Territories, and was intended to forever quiet all clamor about the question of slavery in the same, is now regarded as the greatest blessing ever bestowed upon the people of the northwest. And now, sir, by indentment at least, we are told that that measure of freedom when passed was unconstitutional, and has ever since been fraudulent and void. For

if the Missouri restriction was unconstitutional, most clearly the ordinance of 1787 is. All this we deny, sir, and claim for the Constitution the construction of the framers thereof. We think that the men that made it are as capable of constructing it as even the madcap politicians who have sprung up since their day, and have hewn out for themselves a construction for the Constitution remarkable only for its stupidity.

Who ever heard that the Missouri restriction was unconstitutional until an illegitimate spawn of politicians, who had more faith in their own promotion by trickery than by faithful action, under the Constitution, as it was understood and interpreted from the time of its foundation until 1854, when those would-be wise men discovered the squatter sovereignty doctrine, and claimed it as a panacea for all our political evils. This new doctrine, instead of being a blessing and great pacifier, is the most mischievous of any political dogma that has ever been presented to the consideration of the American people.

Now, sir, I propose to look after the modern men and parties on this question of slavery, and see where they have stood, and where they now stand, in regard to it. Up to the time of the presidential election in 1844, there had been but little said or done by any of the dominant political parties of the country, although there had been more or less discussion at intervals between that time and 1820, the time of the passage of what is commonly called the Missouri compromise. I mean to be understood, that after 1820, up to the time of the agitation of the annexation of Texas, there was no general excitement in the country on the question of slavery; and, sir, in 1844, by dint of good management, the question was controlled by politicians, who evaded any direct issue on the subject until after the election for President was over, and there was nothing to be gained or lost by agitation. Texas had been annexed before Polk was inaugurated, and consequently the Democratic party stood sound before the country, it having escaped the responsibility of the annexation of Texas a slave State.

But, sir, then came the Mexican war, with all its consequences, growing out of the success of our arms in every battle. The flag of the nation waved over the hall of the Montezumas. Mexico was a subdued nation, with her army almost entirely destroyed, without any resources—without any character, and, indeed, without anything, not even a Government worthy of notice. Then, sir, came negotiations for peace, with annexation of territory to be acquired from Mexico as indemnity for wrongs perpetrated upon our people and Government. Next came an excitement upon the slavery question, with all its concomitant evils, and continued up to 1852. During this period, however, a large amount of territory was acquired by treaty from Mexico. The all-absorbing question now was, who shall have control of this vast empire, and what shall be its future destiny? Shall it be doomed to slavery or blessed with freedom? Thus, sir, gave rise to the "Wilmot proviso," and added immensely to the importance of the question which had well nigh absorbed the public sentiment of the North in favor of freedom for that vast domain.

This led to the discussion of the slavery question prior to the annexation of Texas, and nearly

all the great men of the nation engaged in the controversy. I will now allude to such evidence as is within my control on this subject, and call the attention of this House and the country to the history of men and parties of those days on that question; and that my authorities may not be disparaged by calling an insignificant witness first to the stand, I will take the evidence of Franklin Pierce. It is the same Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, that is now President of the United States, and consequently no obscure person. In 1845 this witness testified as follows:

"He had only to say now, what he had always said, that he regarded slavery as one of the greatest moral and social evils—a curse upon the whole country; and this he believed to be the sentiment of all men of all parties at the North."

"Mr. P. was free to admit that he had himself approached this subject of annexation [of Texas] with all his prejudices and prepossessions against it, and on one ground alone—its slavery feature. His convictions on this subject were, as he had stated, strong—not the results of any new light."

"The only difficulty in his mind ever had been, that of a recognition by any new act of our Government of the institution of domestic slavery; and he had found it extremely difficult to bring his mind to a condition impartially to weigh the argument for and against the measure."

This was the testimony of General Pierce, and should have its full weight before the country. "He regarded slavery as one of the greatest moral and social evils." If this is so, sir, it is not only our duty to eradicate the evil where it now exists, but we are bound to prevent its extension. It is the duty of Congress to provide promptly such measures as will protect society from immoral influences, and secure the people in their rights. It may be said we have no power over the subject in the States. I reply, we have power in this District, which is undoubted, and it is our duty to exercise it if the evidence of our witness is worthy of belief; and I claim that for him, and demand action.

Hear this same witness further: it is "a curse upon the whole country; and this he believed to be the sentiment of all men of all parties at the North." Of this no reasonable man has any doubt. That it mars the best interests of the whole people, is a fact so well authenticated, and so firmly established, that to deny it is to make yourself ridiculous. Then why not act with that philanthropy and patriotism which prompts men to generous action and noble deeds? Why delay, when we are all aware that a great and growing curse is now upon the whole country, and we are all suffering from its effects?

At intervals we have peace and good order in the Government, undisturbed by the agitation of this vexed question; but no sooner was that clearly perceptible, than demagogues and political managers who had run down, and become worthless in the sight of the good men of their respective parties, would get up a crisis on this question at the expense of the peace of the country. In 1849-'50 all was excitement; and after the passage of the compromise measure of 1850, the country passed through a most intense agitation and storm of political excitement; and many of the wisest and best men and patriots in the nation had serious apprehensions that a great and overwhelming revolution was approaching, which threatened the permanency of our institutions, and the destruction of the Union. We all remember the great anxiety manifested, and the united effort of all men of all parties to adjust those difficulties. The

people of the North disapproved, seriously, of those measures as disgraceful to them, and for several years remonstrated against them. Public meetings were held in almost every free State, and in almost every city, town, and district, in those States, disapproving and condemning those measures as subversive of their rights.

The pro-slavery men of the South, also, expressed their disapprobation of those measures, in unmistakable and highly denunciatory language. Meetings were held in different parts of the South, threatening a dissolution of the Union. A disruption of political parties then took place. Democracy and Whiggery were lost sight of in the political chaos which followed the discussions upon those questions in that section; and even there, in the political hot-bed of sectionalism, the wise and patriotic men, who loved their country more than party, found themselves, from necessity, compelled to organize these distracted political elements into a party, for the safety of the Union.

The all-absorbing question then was, what shall be done to secure peace and good order to the country? The whole country cried for peace, and all political parties and partisans saw the impending danger; and a united effort was made, and, I am happy to say, successfully made, and peace, good order, and good will, were restored, and the people rejoiced at their deliverance from danger and the security of the Union.

In the adjustment which took place, the free people of the North then claimed, as they now do, that they were seriously wronged in the settlement; but for the common good of the country, and from motives of patriotism, acquiesced in those measures, but never indorsed, approved, or sanctioned them in any manner whatever, except in silent, indignant, acquiescence, exceedingly mortifying and humiliating to them. They regarded it as a humiliating sacrifice, which patriotism only could demand, and no other consideration on earth could have induced them to yield.

The freemen of the North had for years looked with a jealous eye upon the aggressions of slavery and the slave power, which had been slowly stealing itself into every relation of government, and threatened an entire subversion of freedom and free institutions, even in the North. They saw a fixed determination on the part of the South to implant slavery upon free territory, for the purpose of enlarging the political power of the South in the legislative department of this Government, and thereby make slavery a national institution, and compel the free States of the North to assist the South in riveting the chains and shackles of the poor, downtrodden slave. The united humanity of the North was invoked for freedom, against the despotism of the South, and many, very many, then determined that if the South should be compelled by the Government to become slave-drivers, slave-catchers, and blood-hounds, to run down the poor fugitive from tyranny and oppression, they would not submit to such indignity, but would unconditionally refuse to obey the requirements of the "fugitive slave law," and let the consequences take care of themselves. Others stood silently, and with a burning indignation determined, in their own minds, that they would submit to that as the last wrong, come from where it might.

The patriots and statesmen of that day saw the impending danger, and by their personal influence, with much persuasion, induced the people to acquiesce in those measures. They promised that we should have no more such legislation, if the country should become tranquil, and agitation cease. The people did submit, and agitation ceased, and tranquillity was restored; but the people then drove from power the men who had brought that calamity upon the country. The President of the United States, (Mr. Fillmore,) who had signed those laws, was a candidate for election in the Whig party of 1852; but, notwithstanding he had been elected as Vice President on a ticket pledged against the exercise of the veto power, he was repudiated by his party and condemned for not interposing the veto on those measures.

I allude to this to show the intensity of public sentiment on this question, and how difficult it was to reconcile an indignant people. The political parties of that day found it necessary to make pledges to the country against agitation of the slavery question, in or out of Congress. The Whig party did so; and the Democratic party, in order to show its determination to suppress all discussion and agitation, passed resolutions at Baltimore still stronger than did the Whigs. The Democrats throughout the North denounced slavery, and all the troubles growing out of it, and cautioned the people against any further agitation, as dangerous to the Union. They urged the people to vote for General Pierce, as the only reliable man on that question against agitation. They published pamphlets in this city showing that General Scott was not reliable on this matter, and sent them broadcast all over the country. The Democracy only were then reliable; the Democracy only could restore peace and quiet by stopping agitation; the country could only be saved by the election of General Pierce. The people, confiding in their pledges, elected him President by an overwhelming majority. The Whig party was broken up, and its forces scattered. The Democracy then made a coffin, and placed the Whig party into it, and with solemn ceremony buried it in Long Island sound. An affecting obituary notice was then published throughout the whole extent of the country, in every Democratic newspaper, that the Whig party was no more. Then, sir, there was great rejoicing "because that destroyer of the peace and happiness of the country" had passed from existence, and would never more disturb the peace of the country.

But, sir, look at the Democracy now. They are doing the Whig party more than justice by claiming that they are the only conservative party in the country; that its statesmen and orators were great auxiliaries, in those days, to assist the Democratic party in its noble work for the peace and quiet of the country. They need the Whigs now, and expect to gain them by flattery. That the Whig party was a noble and gallant party, no honest man will deny—that it had much to recommend it, is equally true; and at no time did the country see so clearly the true position of the Whig party as now, when all is anarchy and confusion, and every salutary principle of government is prostrated by the misrule of loco focoism and despotism. We hear nothing now about British Whigs, bank-bought Whigs, torics, and

traitors. The time for that kind of bombast is past; and those defamed statesmen of the Whig party are appealed to with long and loud appeals to their patriotism, to come to the rescue of sinking loco focoism and crumbling despotism. How sudden and how wonderful the change! How mysterious and perplexing is all this to the uninitiated!

When the Kansas-Nebraska act had passed, this same party denounced the Whig party, and cautioned the Democracy to stand fast and not permit that party to take advantage of our divisions, and thereby ruin the country by their destructive measures, if they got into power. Now, sir, those destructive men and measures are just what they want; and nothing gives them more pleasure than to hear that some sickly Whig has joined their ranks. The traducers and vilifiers of the Whig party are now its eulogizers. Why do this, gentlemen, without first apologizing for your wrongs, slanders, and injuries upon that party? And why, noble, generous, and high-minded Whigs, do you submit to this flattery and friendship, without explanation for former insult? Have you lost your self-respect and dignity as gentlemen, so as now ignominiously to submit to their degrading and humiliating appeals to you? They will despise you when they have used you, and reproach you for your imbecility and folly. There is no mistaking the issue now before the country. If you, as Whigs, believe that slavery and the slave power should be extended over Kansas and Nebraska, then it is your duty to support James Buchanan for President. He is the only candidate who is pledged to such mischievous measures, and he is only pledged to the South on that question, and to the North he looks for support on the ground of his former predilections for freedom and opposition to slavery. There is this that I have to say; if you have no objection to being cheated, vote for him, and you will probably be gratified. He is bound to defraud one half of his supporters, and you have an equal chance with others. If you believe that freedom is sectional, and slavery is national, then vote for him. If you believe that freedom is national, and slavery sectional, you can never vote for him.

This question to you, gentlemen: Do you believe that the Democratic party would creep to you, as it now does, if it did not have imperative need for you? Did you ever know them to act as they are now doing, since you have known anything of that party? Never. Now I ask you, are you willing to join your former foes for the purpose of extending slavery? Are you willing to become merged with them as mere rank and file, to do the drudgery of slavery and of the Democratic party? If you are prepared for such menial service, and such abnegation, then go with them, and they will soon own you, and transfer you at pleasure to the oligarchs of the South. Do you believe that, if they had taken a reasonable contract that they could execute, they would crawl like snakes after you? No, never! Do you not know that, if they had the power, they would annihilate the last man of you? Do you not know that all their pretended regard for you is only affected, and that they will only appropriate you to their purposes, and then cast you off as unworthy? It seems to me every man of you should be able to see that.

This further question in illustration of my position: Did they ever do anything for you when they had the power? Did they ever elect or appoint any of your men to office or position when they had the power? Certainly not within my recollection. They have taken a contract to extend slavery into Kansas, and they find it more load than they can carry; and now, when crushed under their load, they cry lustily for you, noble-hearted, generous, patriotic Whigs, to relieve them. Will you do it? The Whigs of the South will, but the gallant Whigs of the North will not. They are patriotic and not selfish, and never support such men and such measures. That they intended to extend slavery into Kansas, I have the admission, to all intents and purposes, of Hon. JAMES L. ORR, of South Carolina, in his letter to his constituents, written in December last.

What, then, is our duty, as men loving our country and its free institutions? what is to be done? how shall we act? are questions we should solve and each answer satisfactorily to himself. I answer for myself, that it is my duty to unite with the friends of freedom and free institutions, and that I will with fidelity discharge it. I will think, and speak, and write, for the party of freedom, and cast my vote for Fremont and freedom. We should act together, and make common cause against a common enemy, if we mean to succeed. Then, I say to all Union-loving men, Whigs, Democrats, Americans, and Republicans, come, let us enter this campaign determined to conquer our deadly enemy. Let us carry the war into "Africa," and never cease until our enemies shall cry for quarter. Then we shall see the time when

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
Th' eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers."

Our prospects are flattering; and if we are faithful to our country, our families, and ourselves, we must succeed. "There is no such thing as fail to those that will." We do not only will, but we are determined that truth shall have its sway, and justice be done, without regard to consequences.

Now, sir, in conclusion, I remark, that I have shown by incontestable evidence that the fathers of the Republic regarded slavery as a withering

curse—a blight upon the country, and treason against God; that it is opposed to the full development of the country, and degrades labor; that from its first introduction into the country, it has been the source of immense mischief, and a disturber of the peace and good order of the people; that it has caused dangerous agitation, and now threatens a disruption of this Union. That such an institution, with such tendencies, should find advocates in the free States, is surprising to me, and must be to every candid man. We must now take things as we find them, and look to the future for a correction. We now have the alternative fairly before us, and it is left for us to choose whether we will serve the God of freedom, or the mammon of slavery. Whom will you serve? If you believe in the principles of the Declaration of American Independence, you will act with the Republican party, (the friends of freedom;) but if you repudiate that glorious Declaration, you will be proper subjects for the service of the mammon of slavery, and should act with your masters, and vote with your friends, the filibustering Democracy, or the Buchanan Democracy, who are pledged both ways on this question, and will inevitably defraud every free State man that votes with them, if we are to believe the southern Democracy, with whom they are closely allied.

The whole slave power of the South is now united upon a sectional issue for slavery and its extension, with the doughfaces of the North. Whigs, Democrats, disunionists, fire-eaters, and doughfaces, are now united against freedom in the North. Sectional and pro-slavery men have all united in a crusade against freedom. Southern newspapers are filled with their "pronunciamentos" for slave Democracy; men that heretofore denounced Democracy as agrarianism, jacobinism, and worse than despotism, are now shouting for Buchanan and slavery. Freemen of the North, I appeal to you as national men, as men who love freedom, and your whole country, to stand by freedom's banner, the flag of your country, the Constitution and the Union. Let not the cry of a dissolution of the Union, by hypocritical pretenders, deter you from a faithful discharge of your duty as American freemen. Let the watchword be, Fremont for President and "the Union forever!"

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